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ABSTRACT

Significant needs and additional pressures have been imposed on those persons involved in faculty selection activities on college campuses today. The combination of greater numbers of highly qualified candidates and restricted interview budgets suggests the need for more efficient and less costly methods of employment screening. In addition, further exacerbation of an already difficult situation is developing from the attempts of institutions of higher education to comply with the Affirmative Action Guidelines set forth by the federal government. The videotape technique presented in this document was assessed by the participants in this study to be an extremely valuable tool in the faculty screening preemployment process. In addition, the videotape provided the feedback information necessary to counsel the interviewee with respect to his relative interview strengths and weaknesses. Most importantly, this information is based on the comparison of the interviewee's self-perception to the recorded perceptions of this subject by the other raters. This procedure affords the interviewee the opportunity to see himself as others do. Furthermore, the prospective faculty member may gain valuable information from this counseling model pertaining to the clarity and congruence of the message he projects to others, and the degree of receptivity he may expect to enjoy at 2-year vs 4-year institutions in various geographic locations. (Author/PG)

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FINAL REPORT

VIDEO TAPE APPLICATION TO HIGHER EDUCATION:

PRE-EMPLOYMENT SCREENING

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May 11, 1973

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VIDEO TAPE APPLICATION TO HIGHER EDUCATION: PRE-EMPLOYMENT SCREENING

I. Introduction and Statement of the Problem

Significant needs and additional pressures have been imposed on those persons involved in faculty selection activities on college campuses today. The combination of greater numbers of highly qualified candidates and restricted interview budgets suggests the need for more efficient and less costly methods of employment screening. From 1965 to 1971, the number of graduate degrees awarded had increased from 128,662 to 292,100 (Renetzky, 1971). A concomitant decline, or stabilization, of undergraduate enrollments (Boffey, 1973) during this time period contributed to the unblanaced situation of too many qualified applicants for too few faculty positions.

In addition, further exacerbation of an already difficult situation is developing from the attempts of institutions of higher education to comply with the Affirmative Action Guidelines set forth by the federal government. To ensure that all qualified applicants are duly apprised of faculty positions to be filled, notification of vacancies will be disseminated more widely. Thus expanded publicity of potential faculty vacancies will in turn increase the already large number of applicants to further congest the selection procedures. For example, with only limited publicity of faculty vacancies, there have been cases reported where 600-1,000 applicants have applied for one position. Additionally, the benefits that may have been derived from an open system of faculty recruitment may be offset by limited interview budgets. It is certainly plausible to assume that some very highly qualified candidates for a

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teaching position in a school geographically removed may be excluded solely on the basis of budgetary considerations. Both the applicants and the schools are affected by limited funds.

Further consideration of the more common practices found in the employment screening process focuses on the applicant's needs and pressures. Persons who apply for a faculty position, and are invited to be interviewed, usually receive very gross feedback in that whether hired or not hired, little in the way of interview behavior "de-briefing" is available to them. Clearly, the need for this information becomes apparent when one speculates on the psychological effects devolving from an unsuccessful job search, particularly in the case of the novice aspirant to a faculty position.

The problems of limited funds, and an oversupply of well-qualified candidates for faculty positions demands the development of new and innovative approaches to the faculty selection process. Moreover, this process should include the provision for more informative feedback to the applicant who is viewed and heard by members of a faculty selection committee. The inexperienced applicant, in particular, would benefit greatly from an objective evaluation by faculty raters drawn from the academic discipline in which he desires to teach.

II. Proposed Approach

The typical sequence of pre-employment screening begins with reviewing letters of application, resumes, and letters of recommendation. Information derived from these papers usually provides the major basis for selecting certain candidates to be interviewed. At times, however,

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the strongest candidates "on paper" have distinctive personality/ professional characteristics which preclude their being selected for a particular faculty position. On the other hand, viewing a video taped interview prior to the decision to schedule a personal interview allows employers to observe general personality characteristics of a candidate. The taped interviews supply information about an individual which is generally not available in the paper information - gathering process. Flexibility, articulateness, non-verbal communication skills, and the individual's ability to cope with stressful situations are all observable in the video taped interview. For example, if "candidate anxiety" is apparent in the initial stages of the video taped interview, it is highly probable that this behavioral response will also appear in the face-to-face meeting with the members of a faculty selection committee. In addition, the technique proposed in this study will provide feedback information for candidates with respect to their relative strengths and weaknesses as these are perceived by prospective employers. Thus, video taped interviews provide an effective, low cost information source to employers otherwise available only from personal interviews. The video tape technique also provides a vehicle for the development and training for academic job applicants with respect to improving their interview behavior.

Prior to video taping the interview, its format and content are discussed with the candidate. The interview begins after the interviewee observes his image on the TV monitor and has become familiar with the filming and recording arrangement. This step in the procedure serves to put the interviewee at ease. Slight variations in the interview format are

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sporadically introduced in order to encourage spontaneity in the interview. Evaluation procedures accompany the video tape when it is sent, by the candidate, to prospective employers.

III. Method

a. Subjects. The subjects in this study were three (3) UCLA graduate students who volunteered to participate. Each was seeking employment for the 1973-74 academic year with a 2-year or 4-year college or university. They were willing to accept a position anywhere in the United States. Two of the students had received Masters degrees. One of these was a black, male, history major. The other was a white, female, who had majored in biology. The third student, a white, male, was completing his Ph.D. in psychology.

b. Apparatus. Audio visual equipment included a Sony AV3600 recorder, camera, and monitor.

c. Procedure. After the subjects (Ss) in this project were identified, and the consent of each to release his interview was obtained, a consultative session took place between the subject (S) and the interviewer (I). The interview format was established during this first session. (Guidelines in Appendix A provided the I with a model for the interview format.) The second session consisted of video taping an interview typically 15 minutes in duration.

Immediately after the taping session, both the interviewer (I) and interviewee (EE) independently rated the candidate. The Candidate Rating Scale (CRS) was used for this portion of the evaluation procedure. (The CRS is presented in Appendix B, and will be discussed

later on in this paper.)

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Simultaneous with the identification ofthe Ss, a letter and an appointment sheet (for the purpose of selecting a tape viewing date) were sent to a number of 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities for the purpose of soliciting their participation in this study (Appendix C). The institutions that elected to become participants were: Hawaii Community College, Hilo, Hawaii; Triton Community College, River Grove, Illinois; Los Angeles Southwest College, Los Angeles, California; University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii; California State University, Northridge, Northridge, California; and the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Thus, the geographical spread of the 2-year instiutions was similar to that of the 4-year institutions.

Subsequent to the return of the appointment sheets by the cooperating institutions, a three-part package was made up of the video taped interview, the Candidate Rating Scale and the Technique-Evaluation Questionnaire (Appendix D) was mailed to the project coordinating officer who had been identified by each respondent institution. In addition, an instruction sheet for faculty respondents (Appendix E) accompanied the three-part package described above.

d. Evaluation. As the packets were returned to the investigators by the six institutions participating in this project, the following evaluation procedures were implemented.

1) The Candidate Rating Scales, completed by the two faculty members at each institution, were collated with the two CRS forms retained by the investigators. Together these 4 ratings constitute a complete

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candidate profile.

The CRS is a rating sheet containing an 8-point adjective scale. As noted above, the sheet is rated independently by both the interviewee and the interviewer after they have viewed the video tape of the actual interview.

2) As subsequent ratings marked on the CRS by prospective employers ratings are added to the first two ratings by the I and the EE, the four ratings are converted to a graphic profile, A Profile Composite (Appendix F). This conversion of the ratings to a graphic profile can be used to provide maximum feedback information to the prospective candidate concerning his interview behavior. The CRS is discussed in terms of its ability to provide a relatively non-threatening device through which those involved in the process can not only record, but identify and communicate their perceptions to the interviewee.

The video taped recording of the interviewee's actual behavior becomes the reference for questions regarding discrepancies between the four independent ratings. Thus, the CRS (devised for use in this research project on the feasibility of video tape in the faculty selection and recruitment process) accommodates practical application to a developmental counseling model. Such objective feedback helps the interviewee "see" himself as others do.

I. Theoretical rationale for a graphic display - or - visual dimension in counseling:

A - Perception is enhanced when a visual display is used. Thus, insight, in general, is increased along with an increase in perception. More importantly, as Josiah Dilley (1971) has pointed out, while one may

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diligently identify all of the component parts of a problem - insight occurs when the relationships between these sometimes disparate parts are seen.

B - There are specific advantages for both counselor and counselee of a permanent visual record of an interview and its evaluation. Further counseling activity can proceed from an unambiguous base, i.e., misconceptions should be minimized when both parties are referring to the same visual display. (Note: In our study the visual record provides information on the relationship between (a) how the counselee perceives himself with respect to other perceivers and (b) how other raters perceive the subject with respect to their peer raters.)

Fairly comprehensive and somewhat sophisticated literature continues to expand and support the pre-potency of the picture compared to words. For example, there is the research by Ruesch and Kees (1956) on nonverbal communication which utilizes fairly elaborate pictorial material. Added to this is the informal work by McLuhan (1964) which uses the medium itself!

While Dilley (1971) cites examples of cognitive maps subjectively drawn to provide the counselee greater ability to see alternative blockages, routes, etc.; the instrument about which we are reporting provides both the counselee and counselor some degree of objectivity in "seeing" how others perceive him in relation to how he "sees" himself.

However, the most relevant evidence in support of the proposed procedures presented here come from the research in social psychology. Newcomb, Turner & Converse (1965) have noted that the greatest incidence of attitude change may occur when "new information about properties of objects or persons has

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become available." More to the point, the new or changed properties must be directly experienced if substantial attitude or behavior change is to occur. Newcomb, et al. remark on the general ineffectiveness of techniques such as human argument, persuasion and propaganda as instruments for changing attitudes/perceptions.

Related to this, publications by King & Janis (1956) and Lewin (1947) support the position we take: viz., that emphasis on concrete and specific behaviors will enhance the impact of information for two major reasons. In the first place, being told or reading about behavior usually has less impact than direct confrontation with a concrete situation. Secondly, new discriminations are more likely to occur if the information can be checked and reviewed against behavioral evidence.

Since our procedure exclusively utilizes ratings based on overt, current behaviors it may therefore be expected to optimize the direct experience deemed necessary for effective attitude and behavior change. In addition, the manifest character of the conduct of the interviewee plus the specificity of the rating procedures facilitate cross-checking of the information, both with actual evidence (e.g., reviewing video tapes and re-examining the ratings) and by comparison of the ratings of the same event by different observers.

In the present study, ratings of the Ss attitudes are converted to graphic profiles. This procedure presents an organized visual display to both interviewer and interviewee. A graphic or visual mode, such as this, aids in the discrimination and analysis of the interview behavior.

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Of primary interest to the counselor with respect to this procedure is the amount of discrepancy between raters including the interviewee as a self-rater. While regularities in discrepancies between raters in the assessment of a specific individual would indicate bias in a given rater, widespread variance among them may signal ambiguities in the behavior of the person being rated. This condidtion may indicate that he is ineffective as a communicator, or, that there are significant inconsistencies in his messages. The profiles graphically provide this information directly to the interviewee and require little or no interpretation from the counselor.

Kaswan, Love and Rodnick (1971) used a video tape method in a clinical setting for the purposes of therapeutic intervention and consultations. Bugental, Love & Giantetto (1970) have similarly used a video tape procedure for rating behavioral interactions in a clinical setting. These investigators conducted an analysis of communication within families and were primarily concerned with the differential relationships between smiles and verbal content for adult males and females.

The above clinical investigators used an organized visual display of the video taped behavior of their clients. The present investigation expands the application of the visual feedback method to the context of the counseling/employment interview.

IV. Results

The major objectives of this project were (1) to introduce video tape as a useful screening technique for faculty selection, (2) to assess the value of providing a video tape - mode of supplementary information on candidates to prospective employees, and (3) to obtain feedback information for [illegible] concerning their relative projected personality strengths and

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weaknesses, from prospective employers.

Institutional responses to the Technique Evaluation Questionnaire generated the following data:

1) - 87% of the respondents stated that the video taped interview provided a more concrete basis for their decision on the prospective candidate for a faculty position than would written information only. However, those institutions responding negatively qualified their assessments by indicating that had the interviewer pursued a more "scholarly" vein of questioning, the faculty evaluations of the technique would have been affirmative. Specific to the more prestigious institutions are concerns about the candidate's knowledge of a field of academic specialization, his research, or his scholarly potential. Therefore future studies evolving from this pilot project would include "mini-lectures" by the candidate, followed by discussion with a faculty member in his field. Results from this technique would be compared with the results obtained from the more general conversations shown in the present tapes.

2) - 88% of those responding to the questionnaire stated their affirmative appraisal of video tape as a useful technique in faculty screening. Those not answering with an unequivocal "yes" to this question were undecided about whether or not their commitment to the technique included a final decision on the hiring of an applicant without an on-site interview. (We agree that the final decision should be prefaced by a personal interview at the campus location for the benefit of both hiring institution and the prospective faculty member. Perhaps the word "screening" in the question should be capitalized,

underlined, i.e., emphasized.)

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3) - 50% of the respondents answered affirmatively to the third question on the technique evaluation form: Would you recommend this technique to your students who are searching for faculty positions? Those respondents who did not, were generally hesitant to recommend this technique to their students who search for faculty positions. They did not support this technique for reasons ranging from uncertainty that all students would photograph and/or verbalize well when they are "on camera", to concern for the prospective faculty member's lack of personal contact with future colleagues. (The latter concern reinforces the suggested modification in instructions referred to above, viz., emphasis on the word "screening". Apparently some respondents were fearful that the video tape technique would be used in place of a personal interview. This was not our intention; and, this specification will be explicated more clearly in subsequent instructions.)

However, those who were clearly affirmative noted the efficacy of the technique in the increasingly more common case in which both institutions and candidates are faced with a shortage of travel funds for on-campus visits.

4) - The final question dealt with the faculty members' willingness to hire an individual on the basis of a video taped interview in which they would specify the questions to which the interviewee would respond.

Negative replies outranked positive replies to this question. 60% of the responses were negative; while 40% were positive.

Those institutions answering affirmatively to this query were

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geographically removed from a substantial manpower supply with respect to future faculty hires, e.g., Hawaii Community College. However, the majority of institutions recognized that if they were ultimately reduced to hiring on the basis of written resumes and references only, the video tape technique represents an improvement over a hypothetically undesirable situation.

While we were not proposing that respondents choose between the lesser of two evils; it is clear, from the respondents' comments, that the video tape technique is unequivocally regarded as a superior approach when compared with application by letter, resume, and references. Certainly the ideal situation would include both written documents and personal interviews - but only under those conditions which previaled a number of years ago, i.e., a less substantial amount of paper inquiries by candidates for faculty positions. Thus, with the greatly increased number of applicants for a currently decreasing number of positions, video tape presents an attractive compromise for implementing the faculty screening process.

This sentiment was expressed by a majority of the participants. It was reiterated by James E. Davis of the Office of the President, University of Pennsylvania, along with the following suggestions: "We all agreed that the use of video tapes is an extremely interesting idea and that, if perfected and implemented widely, it could be a most useful screening technique. We envision the technique in this fashion: written credentials would be used to screen the list of applicants from several hundred down to 10-20, and then video tapes could be

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used to select a smaller group (3-10) for on-site interview."

Thus, while most respondent institutions concurred that the use of video taped interviews would have greatly aided the preliminary screening and selection process, few would consider actual hiring a candidate without an on-site interview.

Thus, the first two objectives proposed were met through the cooperation of the participant institutions. Their assessments of the value of the video tape technique was extremely positive. The criticisms of the technique were constructive and can only serve to strengthen the method for future use and further applications, to be delineated later on in this report.

The third objective: to obtain feedback information for candidates from prospective employees concerning their relative interview strengths and weaknesses was actualized through the implementation of the Candidate Rating Scale and the Profile Composite. Appendices G through Q present a graphic display of the interview behavior of the candidate as it is independently perceived by the interviewee, the interviewer, and the two faculty raters.

A comparison of the ratings was made for each candidate with respect to his academic specialization, the instructional level of the respondent institution, viz., 2-year or 4-year college, and the geographical location of the institution. The Profile Composite results presented in Appendices G-Q were based only on those institutions who were able to provide two independent faculty raters from the same academic area as the candidate.

Analysis of the data generated the following statements:

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1 - Rater bias, i.e., regularities in discrepancies between raters in the assessment of a specific individual, appeared in the ratings by the Triton Community College faculty member of the black, male, M.A., history candidate and the white, male, Ph.D., psychology candidate (Appendices H & P, respectively).

2 - Ambiguity, or inconsistency in the S's message was noted only in the case of the ratings on the history candidate by all three institutions, Hawaii Community College, Triton Community College, and the University of Pennsylvania (Appendices G-I).

3 - Geographical differences were found with respect to the degree of refinement or discrimination in the raters' assessment of the candidates' personality characteristics. It appears that those institutions located in the eastern portion of the country produced faculty ratings which were more critical than those of faculty members in western institutions. (In fact, the ratings by the faculties in the Hawaiian schools appeared to be the most "accepting" when compared to their couterpart institutions on the mainland.)

4 - Notable differences between the 2-year and 4-year institutions were found with respect to discrimination, or refinement of the personality dimension ratings by the respective faculty raters. This trend appeared in the ratings on all candidates.

V. Conclusions and Implications

Quite clearly the video tape technique presented here was assessed by the participants in this study to be an extremely valuable tool in the faculty

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pre-employment screening process. In addition, the CRS and its conversion to the Composite Profile provided the feedback information necessary to counsel the interviewee with respect to his relative interview strengths and weaknesses. Most importantly, this information is based on the comparison of the interviewee's self-perception to the recorded perceptions on this subject by the other raters. This procedure affords the interviewee the opportunity to "see" himself as others do. Furthermore, the prospective faculty member may gain valuable information from this counseling model pertaining to the clarity and congruence of the message he projects to others, and the degree of receptivity he may expect to enjoy at 2-year vs 4-year institutions in various geographical locations.

The implication of geography in this study needs to be explored with respect to the socio-cultural milieu that obtains within certain regions of the country. Future studies along this line should examine the similarities and differences in attitudes toward certain personality characteristics of prospective faculty members that prevail within specific geographical boundaries in which a cluster of institutions of higher education are located. If such information were made available to candidates for faculty positions, their efficiency in the quest for employment should be greatly increased. On the other hand, this kind of information might improve the institutional recruitment and selection process by pointing out whatever social/personality biases that might exist on any one faculty selection committee. Certainly expertise in instruction should be the prime criterial attribute of groups designated to engage in faculty recruitment and selection.

The results and conclusions of this pilot study were based on a very small

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sample of Ss and participating institutions. Implications for further investigation, utilizing a greatly increased sample size, are suggested by the trends derived from the data on the attenuated sample used in this pilot study. These are as follows:

1. The assessment of the dynamics of interpersonal perception effects should be extended to include differential effects that may devolve from different rater-interviewee combinations that include differences in race, sex, age, and geographical location.

2. The feasibility of developing interviewer training models using the video tape visual feedback technique should be further explored. It is suggested here that systematic monitoring of his behavior during the interview and subsequent rating procedure should increase the perceptual capabilities of the counselor and thus provide an objective/systematic training procedure. The development of such models would have particular application to career/academic planning counselors.

3. Interviewee training models should also be developed with respect to such variables as: sex, age, field of interest and preparation, race, and social class.

4. The feasibility of expanding the CRS with respect to various career fields, e.g., science, humanities, business administration, etc., should be examined. Once factors common to the respective career areas are identified, a number of distinctive CRS's, each having a specific occupational focus may be constructed and validated.

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Appendix

APPENDIX A*

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1. The interview should be structured in the areas to be covered, and the order in which they are covered should be established in advance and followed with consistency.

2. The interviewer should ask specific questions in a non-directive manner related to the areas to be covered.

3. It is suggested that the interview cover the following areas in the order in which they appear. The questions represent sample questions to be asked at the interview.

   a. What kind of position do you want to have?
   b. What sort of work experience do you have which will be helpful in this kind of work? There is no need to repeat those work experiences which are obvious from your resume.
   c. What education have you had which should be valuable? Again, there is no need to repeat that which is obvious from your resume.
   d. What really gives you the most satisfaction? (alternative: How do you feel you are different from others?)
   e. How do you see these qualities as being helpful to the kind of work you wish to pursue?
   f. What kind of information do you need to have about potential positions in order for you to make an evaluation?
   g. Are there any minimum criteria which the potential positions must satisfy?
   h. Is there anything else which you wish to discuss before ending this interview?

*Note: Guidelines for interview format developed by Dr. Jane Permaul, Educational Careers Center, University of California, Los Angeles.

APPENDIX B

THE CANDIDATE RATING SCALE

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This evaluation form is provided for use with the videotape interview. The interview was designed to provide additional information on the candidate which is not normally included in the resume.

Please have each rater complete this brief evaluation. Information obtained will be useful in assessing the usefulness of videotape in faculty employment practices and as a source of information to the candidate.

Candidate Evaluation:	Not at all 0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Very Much 8
Anxious									
Articulate									
Friendly									
Active									
Enthusiastic									
Mature									
Phony									

Rater:

TITLE_____

DEPT._____

APPENDIX C

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We are requesting your assistance in a research project funded by the Spencer Foundation. This research is designed to explore new methods of screening prospective faculty members through the use of videotape. Institutions selected for this pilot study are representative of the variety of such institutions located throughout the United States.

Since many requests for institutional assistance in order to obtain research data also contain time commitments on the part of the participants, we consider it encumbent upon us to delineate the tasks we are requesting you to perform.

1. Selection of two faculty members from the following disciplines to view one fifteen minute videotape of a candidate from their respective disciplines: Biology, History, and Psychology.

2. Arrange for tape playback facilities for each faculty pair. (Tapes are made on EIAJ-I equipment, Sony AV-3600. Your audiovisual center may be able to assist in playback arrangements).

3. Returning completed evaluation materials and videotapes in prepaid postage containers which we will furnish to your institution.

The purpose of this research is to explore methods which allow faculty and administrators access to as much information on prospective faculty members as possible. On-campus interviews are essential for those few candidates who appear to be strong "on paper," and who have excellent recommendations. However, along with the increasing number of applicants, we find a concomitant rise in the number of strong candidates. Videotape interviews provide supplementary information, some of which can only be obtained through a personal interview.

Please return the enclosed appointment sheet along with the signature of individual(s) who will be coordinating this effort on your part. We will forward to you the videotapes, resumes of the candidates, and evaluation forms.

Thank you for your attention to our request.

Sincerely,

Dr. June E. Millet

Lawrence H. Smith

JEM/LHS:sa
Enclosures: Appointment Sheet
& Return Envelope

APPENDIX D

THE TECHNIQUE EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

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Did This Videotaped Interview Provide:

1) A more concrete basis for your decision on this candidate?

2) Do you feel videotape is a useful technique in faculty screening? Briefly explain.

3) Would you recommend this technique to your students who are searching for faculty positions?

4) Would you hire an individual on the basis of a videotaped interview in which you would specify the questions?

APPENDIX E

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FACULTY RESPONDENTS

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Your institution has a faculty vacancy (hypothetical), and the appropriate screening committee has identified the most qualified applicants for the position. They did so based on the letters of application and resumes provided them by the candidates.

At this time, selected candidates have been notified to forward letters of recommendation to the committee chairman. The individual you will evaluate elected to include a videotape in order to provide supplementary information on himself. This is the tape you will see now.

The sequence of steps in the evaluation procedure is:

1. Review the resume and letters of recommendation.
2. Have the 2 evaluation forms (The Technique-Evaluation Questionnaire and the Candidate Rating Scale) ready for use. Please do not sign your name on these sheets. Instead, we request that you enter your departmental title and subject area (e.g., Prof. Spanish; Assoc. Prof. Chem, etc.).
3. View the videotape and complete the evaluation forms.
4. Please return the evaluation forms along with the videotape as quickly as possible using the enclosed pre-paid mailing packet.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Lawrence H. Smith

June E. Millet

APPENDIX F

COMPOSITE VIDEOTAPE INTERVIEW EVALUATION

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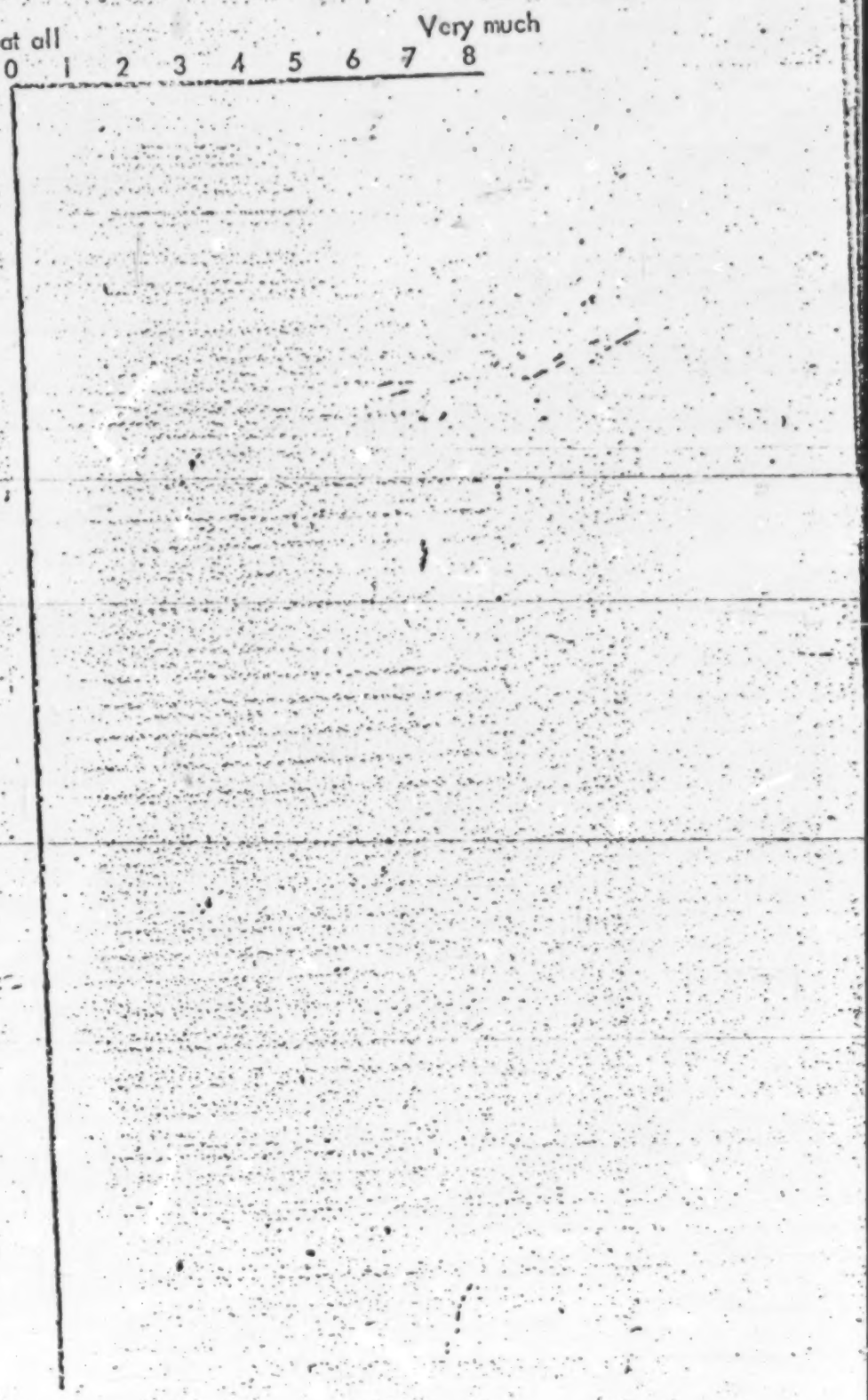

COMPOSITE VIDEOTAPE INTERVIEW EVALUATION

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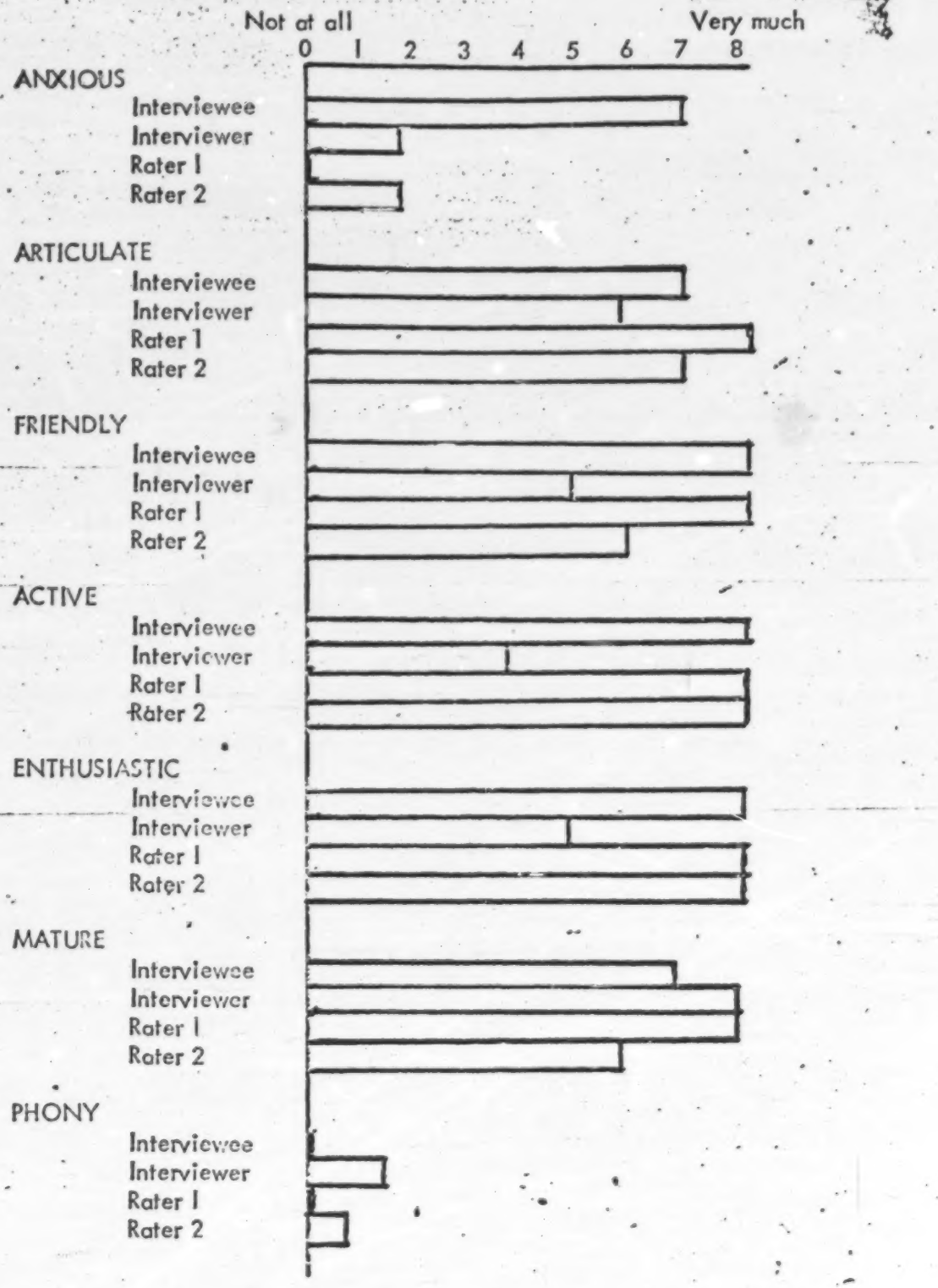

APPENDIX G
HISTORY - HAWAII COMMUNITY COLLEGE